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1 the railroad. Coming down from Carlin, the
2 Palisades, through Beowawe, and in between Austin
3 and Eureka, down the Smoky Valley; who is going
4 to own that land? Who is going to own those
5 tracks? It's going to be a checkerboard
6 fragmentation of that area.

7 I know there's a lot of resentment to
8 a railroad. But, you know, there's some folks in
9 Nevada that think the railroad is the best idea.
10 Number one, when you folks get done hauling that
11 spent fuel, rods, and defense wastes,
12 geographically, that's the center of our State.
13 And once that nuclear waste is hauled and in
14 place and you decide what the equity issues are
15 and what benefits the people of Nevada can
16 realize, that railroad system in the geographical
17 center of our State -- or opens the center of our
18 State up for economic development, economic
19 issues. And I think I probably talked long
20 enough, folks. Thank you. Thank you, again.

21 ~~MR. SKIPPER: Thank you for your comments.~~

22 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you. Our next
23 speaker is Elizabeth Risiden. And Ms. Risiden
24 will be followed by Sylvia Baker.

25 MS. RISIDEN: Good afternoon. A copy of this

1 will be placed in your comment box.

2 THE FACILITATOR: Thank you.

3 MS. RISIDEN: My name is Elizabeth Risiden.
4 I'm a second generation Nevadan. With my
5 children and grandchildren, we now have four
6 generations here. I was born and raised in White
7 Pine County, though I haven't lived here for some
8 years.

1
9 I base my testimony largely on the
10 White Pine County comments to the scope of the
11 repository environmental impact statement of
12 11-22-95, or the White Pine County scoping study,
13 which has been totally ignored by the Department
14 of Energy in preparing the draft EIS.

15 What are we in White Pine County?
16 Fools? Guinea pigs? Didn't we outgrow both
17 foolishness and experimental animal status when
18 we became unwitting downwinders during the
19 testing process at NTS? Now, in its cavalier
20 wisdom, the DOE has yet again put us in our
21 places by refusing to incorporate comment on
22 local environmental impacts and mitigation.

23 I won't bore this panel with
24 recollections of being irradiated as a child, and
25 having lost an uncle to radiation poisoning.

1 These stories have not moved the DOE. However, I
2 am of a literary mind-set, so I offer you the
3 following scenario:

2 4 [The day everything went wrong. It's a
5 February day on Highway 93. Temperatures are
6 hovering at roughly minus 50 degrees, considering
7 the wind chill factor. A blizzard howls as the
8 legal-limit truck, carrying plutonium, negotiates
9 the road. Visibility is severely limited. The
10 driver is tired and knows he can't stop in Ely,
11 for the government, as a sop to the people, has
12 made it illegal for such shipments to halt within
13 the populous areas of White Pine County.

14 The truck has already skidded off the
15 ice-encrusted road on several occasions. The
16 driver is tense. Suddenly -- pardon me. I would
17 like to reword that.

18 The truck has almost skidded off the
19 ice-encrusted road on several occasions. The
20 driver is tense. Suddenly, a herd of mustangs
21 appears out of the whiteout. One, a white
22 stallion, bewildered, races directly toward the
23 truck. The driver can't swerve. He can't gear
24 down. There's no time. The truck plows into the
25 pale horse.

2 cont'd.

1 The horse is thrown onto the truck's
2 hood. Screaming, its hooves and carcass smash
3 through the windshield. The driver loses control.
4 The truck hits a skid. The hardened trailer
5 topples onto its side, propelling it and the cab
6 off the road.

7 His seat belt has held the driver
8 securely. He is shaken, glass-covered with
9 several shallow cuts, but otherwise unhurt. After
10 a moment in which he composes himself, he swears
11 at the horse, bleeding furiously into the cab. He
12 gets cautiously out, being careful not to tip the
13 cab over. It feels like it might go. It's already
14 up on two wheels with the weight of its load and
15 the trailer's weird angle.

16 The driver checks himself for
17 injuries, then walks around the wreck. Thank God,
18 he thinks, the load seems fine. He gets on the
19 cell phone dialing 9-1-1 to Ely's highway patrol.
20 Then he digs flares out of the cab and proceeds
21 to mark off the crash site.

22 It is 80 miles to Ely. The highway
23 patrol instantly contacts the Yucca Mountain site
24 informing them of an accident and possible breach
25 of environmental security. It is a six-hour

2 cont'd.

1 drive, two-hour flight, from Yucca Mountain to
2 the crash site. The snow continues as the
3 patrolman rushes as fast as the deadly, slick
4 road permits to pick up the driver.

5 What no one knows is if the plutonium
6 is secure. In fact, a crack in the container is
7 already emitting radioactivity into the air.
8 Particles are carried by the snow to the ground,
9 where they freeze into the already thick layer of
10 ice. Particles remain airborne.

11 Shortly, a car carrying a family comes
12 along. Despite the trucker's warning to stop and
13 not go near the crash, they are impatient, afraid
14 they will be in too much danger, so they plow
15 through, taking particles with them. Of course,
16 the trucker is generally armed, but by the time
17 he slip-slides from where he's been setting the
18 flares, the car has driven out of range. And he
19 can't see it well, anyway.

20 With plutonium continuing to leak, an
21 ecological disaster is in the making.

22 I could go on with this insane
23 scenario. However, you people on this panel know
24 more than I about why you have chosen to do
25 absolutely nothing about putting White Pine

2 cont'd.

1 County's concerns in to the EIS.]

2 I submit that you have failed to do
3 this because [you don't have any fundamental
4 understanding of the climate, hazards, both in
5 terms of terribly fickle and unpredictable
6 wildlife, and that you have willful pride and
7 drive that enable you blindly to put the square
8 peg of nuclear waste, both high- and low-level,
9 in to the round hole of Yucca Mountain, in spite
10 of much evidence that it is a poor storage site
11 due to potential volcanism and leakage in to the
12 groundwater from the fault zones, to say nothing
13 of leakage due to the inability of mankind to
14 make a container that is guaranteed to last
15 10,000-plus years.

16 Why haven't you addressed problems of
17 climate, lack of training to personnel to handle
18 such emergencies locally, lack of proper highways
19 to carry such hazardous waste, lack of attention
20 to what will happen to the local economy in terms
21 of stigma after a nuclear spill? I'll bet
22 tourists don't flock to Chernobyl.

23 What will happen to the environment at
24 the Great Basin National Park if there is a
25 nearby plutonium leak? How many people in what

3 cont'd.

1 radius from the accident will die because of air
2 and waterborne contamination in the event of such
3 a leak?

4 You don't address these because it's
5 easier to sell the project from a stance of
6 wishful thinking and denial. I hope that's your
7 reason. I'd hate to think that, once again,
8 officials of the atomic bureaucracies see people
9 on the transport routes passing through Nevada
10 and living along the states where transport will
11 be done and natives of the State of Nevada as
12 being expendable for at least 27 years while you
13 haul wastes over America.

4

14 Yes, I'm angry. I'm also prayerful
15 that because there is such a demand to treat and
16 dispose of both high- and low-level nuclear
17 wastes, that there are people working on a
18 technology or technologies that would enable this
19 material to be treated or effectively disposed of
20 on-site. Parenthetically, to my written comments,
21 I certainly hope you would put a few billion
22 dollars in to looking at that.

23 Why can't we wait for such technology,
24 rather than setting the citizens of the United
25 States up for potentially nightmarish exposure on

4 cont'd.

1 possible multiple occasions to the worst
2 materials the nuclear age has generated? Why
3 can't you find it in your policies to err on the
4 side of caution, as would any good scientist when
5 exploring such a potentially dangerous plan with
6 so many variables and so many unknowns.]

5

6

7 I submit [you've developed only this
8 site because you believe Nevada is a wasteland
9 and also weak politically.] [You're banking on
10 having no interstate reaction from the states
11 throughout which this material will be hauled,
12 because you will keep the problem quiet. Just
13 what is your logic in tempting fate by hauling
14 this material through many of the 50 states?
15 Where is the political, moral payoff for taking
16 this kind of chance? Is there enough monetary
17 gain possible to stake so much on this?]

18 If you ever knew it, you have
19 forgotten what the gods did to mortals who
20 displayed hubris or overweening pride.
21 Furthermore, you have nothing to lose, for you
22 will be long dead when the final record of the
23 noble experiment of Yucca Mountain is written.

8

24 [How does the U.S., be it the NRA, EPA,
25 or AEC, build 10,000 years of accountability in

8 cont'd.

1 to this project? Surely you recognize, given the
2 mega changes in society now, that guaranteeing
3 responsibility over such a project is not
4 possible. Ten thousand years ago, after all,
5 mankind had just begun the age of agriculture.

7

6 [Isn't it better to have people through
7 many generations storing wastes in their back
8 yards where proximity to it will inspire wise
9 stewardship, than to put it away, where out of
10 sight, out of mind will be a terrible
11 temptation?] Thank you for your time, even though
12 your draft EIS certainly shows little or no
13 fundamental concern.

14 MR. SKIPPER: Thank you.

15 THE FACILITATOR: Our next speaker is -- our
16 next speaker will be Sylvia Baker. And she will
17 be followed by Ginger Swartz.